

DISTRICT COURT (SIXTH DISTRICT : SEVIER COUNTY) [1695]

NATURALIZATION RECORD BOOKS, 1896-1929.

1 microfilm reel

DESCRIPTION: To become a citizen of the United States, an individual normally filed a "declaration of intention to become a citizen" at least two years prior to applying for citizenship. The next step was the naturalization hearing at which the candidate and witnesses either made oral statements or filed written petitions and affidavits attesting to the applicant's character, worthiness to become a citizen, and the validity of statements made to the court. If the judge found the applicant eligible to become a citizen, an oath was administered and the individual renounced his former citizenship. At this point a certificate of citizenship was issued documenting that fact. These volumes contain documentation of the final steps of becoming a United States citizen. They include petitions for naturalization, certificates of citizenship, and accompanying documentation.

The first volume contains only certificates of citizenship. Each form gives the date, applicant's name, former foreign residence and current residence. A standardized summary of the procedures assured that the necessary evidence was provided and the required oaths taken. The judge then signed, attesting to the applicant's admission as a citizen.

After 1906, courts were required to use pre-printed forms in volumes furnished by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization of the Department of Commerce and Labor (later the Naturalization Service of the U.S. Dept. of Labor). Each volume was to be indexed and the petitions numbered consecutively beginning with number 1 in volume 1. A duplicate copy was to be sent to the Bureau of Naturalization.

The petitions include the individual's name, residence, occupation, birthdate, and birthplace; the place from which he emigrated, the date, port of arrival, and vessel name; the date on which he declared his intention of becoming a citizen and the name of the court involved; his

wife's name, birthplace, and residence; and any previous petitions filed. There were also blanks to record his children's names, birthdates, birthplaces, and residences. The applicant was required to take an oath that he was not an anarchist or a polygamist and to renounce his former sovereign. An applicant had to be able to speak English and have resided continuously in the United States for five years and in the state for one year.

Also included on the petition form were the affidavit of two citizen witnesses who validated the individual's petition information and declared that he was of good moral character. The printed oath of allegiance and court order admitting the petitioner to citizenship are also included. By 1920, there is space for memoranda of continuances in the proceedings, names of substitute witnesses, and space to record the denial, not just the acceptance, of the petition.

Various corroborating documents had to be produced at the time of application and hearing. These are usually bound into the volumes along with the petitions. They include declarations of intention, filed earlier in a variety of courts, of the individual's desire to become a citizen. The volumes also include certificates of arrival, required of those who entered the country after 1906, from the Bureau of Naturalization showing the individual's name, date, place and manner of arrival in the United States. Correspondence is often included, usually from the Bureau of Naturalization, detailing changes in naturalization law and procedures, specifying the rationale for denying citizenship, and discussing Homestead filings for which an individual had to be a citizen.

ARRANGEMENT: Volumes and entries are chronological by petition date. After 1906, they appear by case number, chronologically arranged by petition date, in sequentially numbered volumes.

RELATED RECORDS: For records of those who declared their intention to become a citizen at a future date in the First District Court in and for Sevier County, consult series 13476, DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION RECORD BOOKS. Declarations of intention and certificates of citizenship for Sevier County residents before 1896 could be in the records of any of the district courts, the Supreme court, or the Sevier County Probate Court. County residents could also file in any other court of record across the country until 1906. Since Sevier County was in the First District before statehood, the researcher may want to consult the DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION for the First District Court, series 85113 and the CERTIFICATES OF CITIZENSHIP, series 83895. The Archives holds a copy of one RECORD BOOK, series 23908, from the Sevier County Probate Court which includes a few naturalizations. For additional help consult the Research Guide to Naturalization records.

PROCESSING NOTE: Processed by A.C. Cone in March 2003.

PREFERRED CITATION: Cite the Utah State Archives and Records Service, the creating agency name, the series title, and the series number.

GAPS: The location of records between 1902 and 1920 is unknown.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description
1	Index, 1896, Apr 13-1902, Aug 5
1	Index, 1920, 29 May-1929, 29 Jun [#51-#84]